

*January 19, 2010*

After a short break, a new legislative session is beginning to heat up in Washington. During the Congressional recess, I had the opportunity to travel around the 12th District, meeting with folks from all over and hearing what was on their mind. Folks from across the district came out for the Rural Listening Tour from January 5 - 8, which included town hall meetings in Burke, Warren, Glascock, Washington, Jefferson, Evans, Bulloch, Candler, Emanuel, and Tattnall counties. I also stopped to tour local farms and meet with folks in Screven, Jenkins, and Johnson counties.

In addition to the annual Rural Listening Tour, I was fortunate enough to meet with members of the American Legion Post #103 in Swainsboro to discuss what Congress has done to help out our nation's heroes, including a 40% increase for Veterans' health benefits, the new G.I. Bill for the 21st Century, and a \$2,400 tax credit for businesses that hire unemployed veterans. We also discussed my new bill, H.R. 4041, which would improve the Federal Recovery Coordinators Program (FRCP) by hiring more personnel to help our veterans cut through the bureaucratic red tape at the VA and Department of Defense to get the benefits they've earned. The FRCP was a key recommendation of the Dole-Shalala Commission, which sought to fix the problems with the VA after 2007's scandal at Walter Reed Army Medical Center. When our men and women in uniform return home, our nation has an obligation to ensure that they receive the benefits they've earned through their service. I won't accept anything less, and H.R. 4041 will help.

If you weren't able to make it out for the Rural Listening Tour, I still want to hear what's on your mind. As the health care debate heats up in Washington and another legislative session begins, it's important for me to hear from the folks back home. Feel free to visit [www.barrow.house.gov](http://www.barrow.house.gov) or call toll free at 1-866-890-6236 to let me know what's on your mind.